

Scope and Purpose

The information found in this document is intended to outline the process for decommissioning residential heating oil tanks and its associated piping that contains, or previously contained, heating oil for the primary purpose of heating one or two-family residential structures. Underground tanks that have been out of service for a period of one year shall be removed from ground or abandoned in place. These provisions do not address requirements for aboveground heating oil tanks or tanks other than residential heating oil tanks.

Permits

A site-specific permit from the Everett Fire Department is required to remove or abandon in place an underground residential heating oil tank. Decommissioning work may not begin until a permit has been issued.

Permit applications shall be submitted using <https://onlinepermits.everettwa.gov/etrakit/default.aspx> . Permits will be issued electronically after submittal, review, and payment.

Permits may cover multiple tanks located at a single inspection area. If additional tanks are to be removed at later dates separate permits need to be obtained.

Decommissioning must be conducted by, or overseen by, an individual certified by the International Code Council (ICC) as an Underground Storage Tank Decommissioner. All contractors and companies must comply with International Fire Code, including all other local, state, and federal requirements.

A Tank Decommissioning Report shall be completed, signed and submitted to the Everett Fire Department by the ICC certified decommissioner performing, or overseeing, the work along with the property owner within 30 days of completion.

Soil Samples

Compliance with the IFC does not require that any soil samples be taken. However, the property owner or operator may have other obligations including but not limited to, spill or leak reporting requirements and clean up requirements under environmental or other laws apart from the IFC. Visit www.ecy.wa.gov and search "Heating Oil Tank" for more information.

Safe Work Preparation

- No smoking in the area.
- Shutting down all open flame and spark-producing equipment not necessary for the removal of the underground tank.
- Using only hand tools to expose tank fittings and preparing for the vapor-freeing procedures.

- Controlling static electricity or providing a conductive path to discharge static electricity by bonding and grounding equipment and vehicles.
- Roping off tank area from pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- Provide two 20-B:C portable fire extinguishers within 50 feet of operations.
- Locating and mark all utility lines on site.
- Determining meteorological conditions. Vapor accumulation can occur on still and high-humidity days. Under these conditions, test the area for vapor accumulation; if present, either provide additional forced ventilation or delay the job until there is a breeze and it is less humid. Excavated soil should be tested for vapor release.
 - Artificial ventilation or repeated turning of excavated soil might be necessary to avoid ignitable concentration of vapors.
- Ensuring personnel are wearing hard hats, safety shoes, and safety glasses and a combustible gas indicator is available.

Removal and Disposal of Tanks

Removal of above-ground and underground tanks shall be in accordance with all of the following:

- Flammable and combustible liquids shall be removed from the tank and connected piping.
- Piping at tank openings that is not to be used further shall be disconnected.
- Piping shall be removed from the ground.
 - Exception: Piping is allowed to be abandoned in place where the fire code official determines that removal is not practical. Abandoned piping shall be capped safeguarded as required by the fire code official.
- Tank opening shall be capped or plugged, leaving a 1/8-inch to 1/4 –inch-diameter opening for pressure equalization.
- Tanks shall be purged of vapor and inerted prior to removal.
 - Purging or ventilating the tank replaces the flammable vapors in the tank with air, reducing the flammable mixture of fuel and oxygen below the lower explosive limit or lower flammable limit (LFL).
- No cutting torch or other flame, or spark, producing equipment should be used until the tank has been completely purged or otherwise rendered safe.
- All exterior above-grade fill and vent piping shall be permanently removed.



Disposal of Tanks

Tanks should be labeled with information about the former contents, present vapor state, vapor-freeing treatment method, and warning against reuse.

Tanks should be removed from the site promptly and preferably the same day as taken from the ground, because additional vapor can be released from liquid absorbed in tank wall corrosion or residues. However, before removal the tank atmosphere must be checked to ensure the flammable vapor concentration does not exceed safe levels.



Tanks Abandoned in Place

Tanks abandoned in place shall be as follows:

- Flammable and combustible liquids removed from the tank and connected piping.
- The section, inlet, gauge, vapor return, and vapor lines disconnected.
- The tank is to be filled completely with an approved inert solid material.
- Remaining underground piping capped plugged.
- No cutting torch or other flame, or spark, producing equipment should be used until the tank has been completely purged or otherwise rendered safe.
- A record of tank size, location, and date of abandonment shall be retained.
- All exterior above-grade fill piping permanently removed when tanks are abandoned or removed.